

acceptable to the Russians before entering into parleys with them. Then, following the Security Council's recommendation, Qavam at the head of a five-man mission left for Moscow. He stayed in the Soviet capital from February 19 till March 11 but failed to reach an agreement. During this two-and-a-half-week stay he saw Stalin twice and Molotov four times. According to the official revelation of Hosein Ala, Iranian Ambassador in Washington, the Soviet leaders formulated the following proposals:

- (1) Soviet troops would continue to stay in some parts of Iran for an indefinite period.
- (2) The Iranian government would recognize the internal autonomy of Azerbaijan. If the Iranian government acquiesced in this request, the Soviet government offered to take steps to arrange that:
- (3) The Prime Minister of Azerbaijan, in relation to the central government, would bear the designation of Governor General.
- (4) Azerbaijan would have no Ministry of War or Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- (5) Thirty per cent of the Azerbaijan revenue would be paid to the Iranian central government.
- (6) All correspondence with the central government would be in Persian.

(3) The Soviet government would abandon its demand for an oil concession. Instead it proposed that an Iranian-Russian joint stock company be set up with 51 per cent of the shares owned by the Soviets and 49 per cent by Iran.¹¹

On March 2, 1946, during Qavam's stay in Moscow, the deadline came for evacuation of all Allied troops. In practice the deadline referred only to British and Soviet troops, as the Americans had left Iran by January 1. The British forces were

withdrawn by March 2, but there was no sign of Soviet evacuation, except for some military movements from one district to another inside Iran. The approach of March 2 was watched in Washington and London with growing uneasiness and tension. The failure of the Soviets to evacuate would place before the West a new violation of an international agreement by the Russians and thus complicate the whole matter. It would also call for more positive action on the part of the West, as non-

¹*New York Times*, March 20, 1946.